

The regional Bell companies operate an "essential facility" as commonly defined by the FCC. For this reason, they should continue to be required to accommodate other ISP firms that wish to purchase access from them. This wholesale provisioning has already shown itself to stimulate competition and benefit consumers, as well as the telecommunications industry as a whole. To remove this requirement would cripple the 1996 Telecommunications Act and violate Congress's clearly stated intentions in the act. Chairman Powell, I request that you and your fellow Commissioners not allow large corporate interests to reestablish dominance in this critical market. To do so would restrict competition, cripple small businesses, reduce the efficiency of the telecommunications industry, and harm consumers.